

maturity, then perhaps, the former view would be preferred. Now, in this matter of guidance, suppose we take for illustration a single passage. "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He shall guide you into all truth." Suppose we interpret this passage on the principle of unlimited meaning and suddenness of fulfilment, and what is the result? Sudden omniscience on the part of all to whom the promise was made. Was it made to all believers, or only to the apostles who were to be the divinely inspired amanuenses of the Holy Spirit? There is room for diversity of opinion here, hence dogmatism is out of place. If made to the apostles only, then we know the phrase "all truth" must have had a limited meaning, referring to such truth only as was necessary to a life of faith and godliness. If to all believers, it could hardly be more comprehensive than this. If to all believers in an unlimited sense, then all believers are omniscient and infallible as God Himself, which is blasphemous. As a matter of fact, such a thing never has been and never can be, either in this world or that which is to come. We might as well quote Matt. v. 48; John i. 16; Eph. iii. 19, and kindred passages, and then claim that believers were to be invested with every divine attribute in its "fulness," or most absolute sense, and that, consequently, every believer could claim to be made, like Christ, "in the form of God, thinking it no robbery to be equal with God." Such presumptions represent God as divided against Himself, and open the door for unbridled fanaticism; for if these promises extend to all believers, they must not be monopolized by a few narrow-minded, self-assertive individuals, claiming a superior degree of piety and light, but they must be recognized as the common heritage of the Church, hence all her divisions and imperfections are laid at the door of the Deity, and He is made responsible for them. The Church of Rome drifted off on some such line as this, and it brought her into a somewhat anomalous predicament. She held correctly enough that God was infallible in knowledge. He had given promises of unlimited wisdom, knowledge, understanding and guidance to His Church. She claimed she was His Church, and no mistake, for her ecclesiastical pedigree was unbroken from the apostles down. The promises she interpreted without limitation of meaning, the fulfilment to be realized in time, therefore she was as infallible as God Himself,

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